

Application Serial No. 10/612,475  
Examiner: A.M. Dunwoody  
Art Unit: 3679

PATENT  
M&G No. 01945.0135US01

### Remarks

Reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and following remarks. Claim 1 has been amended and is supported, for instance, at page 8, line 29 to page 9, line 2, at page 10, lines 1-17 and in Figures 1A and 1C of Applicants' disclosure. Claims 16-19 have been added and are supported at page 9, lines 19-29 of Applicants' specification. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-10 have been examined. Claims 11-15 have been withdrawn. Claims 1-19 are pending.

Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Carstens (U.S. Patent No. 4,863,201). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, and respectfully request reconsideration in view of the following comments.

Claim 1 recites a coupler device with a body having an overmold portion formed on the outer sidewall of the body. The overmold portion is defined as a material molded over said body as an additional layer. (Page 8, line 29 to page 9, line 2 and page 10, lines 1-17.) The additional layer is such that the overmold portion defines an additional layer formed substantially about said outer sidewall. (Figures 1A and 1C.)

The present invention of claim 1 provides a coupler with improved characteristics and distinct advantages. The coupler body can be molded with tight, specific dimensions, while the overmold portion can form an additional layer over the body. The body can be molded to avoid distortion or any added windaging inside the bore, which can occur if the body and overmold portion were formed as a single non-symmetrically molded part. Forming the overmold as a separate layer outside enables the outer shape of a coupler to be modified as needed to protect external structures of a coupling assembly. Thus, the need to fine-tune the coupler body undermold to desired dimensions can be avoided, as the body can be molded as a substantially uniform and symmetrical part. In this manner, sealing and/or other surfaces of the body that require tight tolerances are preserved. Thus, a finished coupling body with an overmold portion, defines both an undermolded layer and overmolded portion, can be efficiently manufactured at low cost. (Page 10, lines 7-30.)

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Carstens, however, does not teach or suggest the features recited by claim 1. In particular, Carstens fails to disclose an overmold portion, as required by claim 1. Carstens does not teach or suggest an overmold portion defining a material molded over said body as an additional layer, such that the overmold portion is formed substantially about the outer sidewall. In contrast, Carstens mentions a female coupling member 14 that includes a plastic sleeve 30. The female coupling member 14 is joined to a stainless steel coupling body 32 by a set screw 34. (Col. 4, lines 21-50.) The design in Carstens, however, does not constitute an overmold portion for a coupler body as defined by claim 1. The claimed invention defines overmold as an additionally molded layer over the coupler body, which is distinguished from typical designs where a formed plastic part is simply connected to another part. Thus, Carstens simply provides a coupling body 32 with a separate female coupling member 14 attached to the coupling body 32 by a set screw 34. (Figures 1 and 4.) In fact, Carstens does not use or mention an overmold portion, and certainly does not refer to an overmold portion defined as an additional molded layer formed over a coupling body. Thus, the cited reference does not provide the features of claim 1 and would not enjoy the advantages resulting from the present invention. For at least these reasons, claim 1 is not anticipated by Carstens. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 and dependent claims 2-10 and 16-19 therefrom are allowable over Carstens.

Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

With the above amendments and remarks, Applicants believe that the claims now pending are in a condition for allowance. Favorable consideration is respectfully requested. If any further questions arise, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the number listed below.

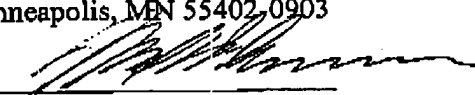


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